

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee
DATE	10 June 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps
REPORT NUMBER	CR&E/25/141
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly and David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Mark Reilly and David Dunne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	9

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps in accordance with Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee Terms of Reference to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively within the Operations and Strategic Place Planning Clusters.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps set out in appendices A to D.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for overseeing the system of risk management and for receiving assurance that the Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) are effectively identifying and managing risks. Reviewing the strength and effectiveness of the Council's system of risk management as a whole is a key role for the Committee.
- 3.2 The Risk Management Policy Framework states that all other committees should receive assurance on the risk management arrangements which fall within their terms of reference. This is provided through the risk registers for the relevant Clusters which fall within the remit for this Committee as detailed below:
- Operations
 - Strategic Place Planning

Risk Registers

- 3.3 The Council's Risks Registers are tools used by Functions and Clusters to capture and manage the risks which could prevent achievement of organisational outcomes and service delivery.

- 3.4 The Council's Corporate Risk Register (CRR) captures the risks which pose the most significant threat to the achievement of the Council's organisational outcomes and have the potential to cause failure of service delivery. The CRR is scrutinised annually by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5 The Cluster Risk Registers are set out in appendices A and B and reflects the risks which may prevent each Cluster from delivering on organisational outcomes and services, these risks may be escalated to the CRR where deemed necessary.
- 3.6 The risks contained within the Risk Register for each Cluster are grouped by risk category in appendix E and show the Council's corresponding risk appetite for each category as set within the Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) which was approved by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in May 2025.

The Clusters are working towards a target risk score which aligns with the risk appetite.

- 3.7 The Cluster Risk Registers provides the organisation with the detailed information and assessment for each risk identified including;
- **Current risk score** – this is current assessment of the risk by the risk owner and reflects the progress percentage of control actions required in order to achieve the target risk score.
 - **Target risk score** – this is the assessment of the risk by the risk owner after the application of the control actions. This is aligned with the risk appetite for this particular category of risk.
 - **Control Actions** – these are the activities and items that will mitigate the effect of the risk event on the organisation.
 - **Risk score** – each risk is assessed using a 4x6 risk matrix as detailed below.

The 4 scale represents the impact of the risk and the 6 scale represents the likelihood of the risk event.

Impact	Score						
Very Serious	4	4	8	12	16	20	24
Serious	3	3	6	9	12	15	18
Material	2	2	4	6	8	10	12
Negligible	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score		1	2	3	4	5	6
Likelihood		Impossible	Almost Very Low	Low	Significant	High	Very High

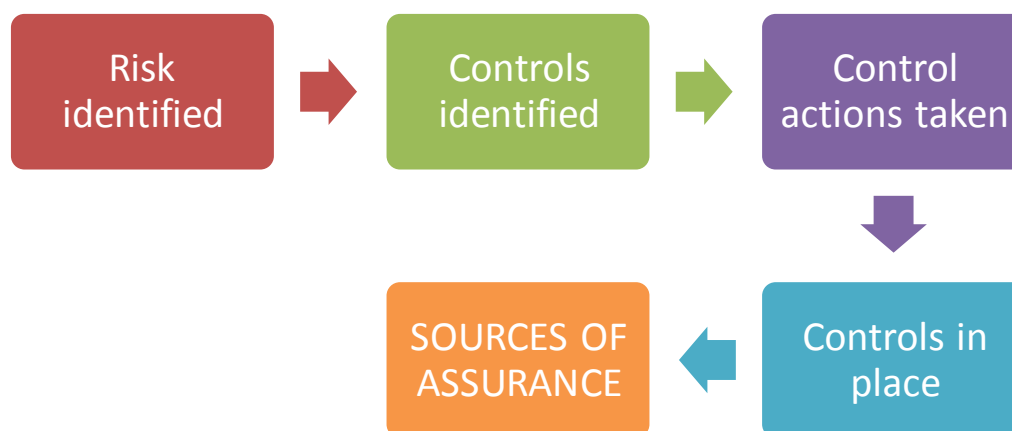
3.8 Development and improvement of the Cluster Risk Registers and associated risk management processes has continued since the Cluster Risk Register was last reported to Committee:

- The Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) was reviewed and updated.
- Work to complete the recommendations from the internal audit of the Council's Risk Management arrangements including enhancements to Cluster Risk Management reporting which are incorporated within this report.
- On-going improvements and updates to the "Managing Risk" pages published on the Council's intranet pages which contains information and links for officers and elected members on the Council's RAS, Risk Management Policy, Guidance and Training. This supports the further embedding of our risk management culture and ensures that everyone knows the part they play in managing risks within the wider system.
- Risk owners and leads continue to review and update risk registers to improve monitoring and reporting across the organisation. These are mechanisms which reflect the day-to-day business of assessing and mitigating the risks and opportunities inherent in delivering public services.

Assurance Maps

3.9 The risk registers which are reviewed by the Council's Committees detail the risks identified within each of the relevant Functions and Clusters and provide detail of the risk, the potential impact and consequence of the risk materialising and the control actions and activities required to manage and mitigate the risk. Assurance Maps as set out in appendices C and D provide a visual representation of the sources of assurance associated with each Cluster so that the Committee can consider where these are sufficient. Sources of assurance are controls which are fully effective, following the completion of control actions.

Presentation of each Cluster's assurance map provides full sight of the defences we have in place as an organisation to manage the risks facing local government.



- 3.10 The Assurance Map provides a breakdown of the sources of assurance within “three lines of defence”, the different levels at which risk is managed. Within a large and complex organisation like the Council, risk management takes place in many ways. The Assurance Map is a way of capturing the sources of assurance and categorising them, thus ensuring that any gaps in sources of assurance are identifiable and can be addressed:

First Line of Defence “Do-ers”	Second Line of Defence “Helpers”	Third Line of Defence “Checkers”
The control environment; business operations performing day to day risk management activity; owning and managing risk as part of business as usual; these are the business owners, referred to as the “do-ers” of risk management.	Oversight of risk management and ensuring compliance with standards, in our case including ARSC as well as CMT and management teams; setting the policies and procedures against which risk is managed by the do-ers, referred to as the “helpers” of risk management.	Internal and external audit, inspection and regulation, thereby offering independent assurance of the first and second lines of defence, the “do-ers” and “helpers”, referred to as the checkers” of risk management.

Risk Overview and Comparison

- 3.11 Below is a comparison with the Cluster risks reported to Committee in 2024 by each Cluster:

Operations Cluster

Risks de-escalated to Operational level or closed:

None.

New risks added or escalated to Cluster level:

The risk relating to Energy from Waste - Financial/Contract Risk was added to the Cluster risk register in February 2025.

Risks Remaining on the Operations Risk Register:

Risk Title	Current Risk Score 2024	Current Risk Score 2025	Movement
Climate change – Tree Disease	12	12	→
Energy from Waste - Financial/Contract Risk	N/A	12	N/A
Loss of Operator's Licence	9	9	→
Sea Defence Failure	12	12	→
Substance Misuse	15	15	→
Waste Disposal Failure	3	3	→

Operations Cluster Risk Overview

There is one new risk regarding Energy Waste about financial and contractor failure. The service has regular meetings with the contractor and has controls in place for business continuity.

The other risks for Operations remain but the risk scores have remained constant. Current controls actions are still managed by the appropriate service.

The Climate Change - Tree Disease risk, although increasing in 2024, is being controlled by the service regularly who regularly inspect particular tree genera for associated tree diseases and pests infestation such as Dutch Elm and Ash die back.

The substance misuse risk continues to be mitigated by the tools available to There is one new risk about substance misuse and is associated with societal changes in the use of various substances and the tools available to management to monitor employees. Mitigation of this risk has made the risk more manageable with the new "Substance Misuse" Policy and the ability to use "With Cause" testing. The Substance Misuse Risk Averse Score is not aligned with the Risk Appetite Statement as we want to avoid risks in this area and not tolerate a degree of risk.

The Waste Disposal, Sea Defence and loss of Operators Licence risks are mitigated by service controls. For the Waste Disposal, EfW and loss of Operators Licence risks the Risk Averse Scores are not aligned with the Risk Appetite Statement as we want to avoid risks in this area due to the impact of failure of delivery in this particular service.

Strategic Place Planning Cluster



Risks de-escalated to Operational level or closed:

None.

New risks added or escalated to Cluster level:

None.

Risks Remaining on the Strategic Place Planning Risk Register:

Risk Title	Current Risk Score 2024	Current Risk Score 2025	Movement
Climate, Natural Environment and Biodiversity duties - Council Compliance	12	12	
Strategic Plan Delivery - SPP	6	6	

Strategic Place Planning Cluster Risk Overview

Identified risks remain unchanged from last year. Complexity around reporting duties for Climate, Natural Environment and Biodiversity duties remain, with a developing picture across the legislative landscape with regards to the scope of many of these duties. Officers continue to monitor and feedback on consultations and legislative changes, through the Strategy Board and to committee at the appropriate trigger points.

The complexity of some of these duties will only become apparent over time and this risk will have to be continuously monitored.

In terms of strategic plan delivery the risks around implementing under a new legislative framework Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the National Planning Framework 4, remain and present ongoing challenges in terms of specialist skills and knowledge gaps. There is ongoing work to skill up officers in these areas.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. This report deals with risk management at Cluster level and this process serves to identify controls and assurances that finances are being properly managed.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Council's Risk Registers serve to manage many risks with implications for the legal position and statutory responsibilities of the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

- 7.1 There are no risks arising from the recommendations in this report. The Committee is provided with assurance that the risks presented within the Cluster Risk Register are those that may affect achievement of organisational outcomes and delivery of services for each Cluster are identified, appropriately managed and that the Council's activities are compliant with its statutory duties.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	The council is required to have a management system in place to identify and mitigate its risks.	The council's risk management system requires that risks are identified, listed and managed via Risk Registers.	L	Yes
Compliance	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Operational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Financial	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Reputational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	As above.	As above.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

- 8.1 The recommendations within this report have no direct impact on the Council Delivery Plan however, the risks contained within the Council's risk registers could impact on the delivery of organisational outcomes.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It is confirmed by the Chief Officers – Strategic Place Planning and Operations that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not applicable

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A – Cluster Risk Register - Operations

11.2 Appendix B – Cluster Risk Register – Strategic Place Planning

11.3 Appendix C – Assurance Map – Operations

11.4 Appendix D – Assurance Map – Strategic Place Planning

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